



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

ELIZABETH A. CHAR, MD
DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 1, 2022

22-011

DOH launches “Stronger Together: We See/They See” campaign

HONOLULU – The Hawai‘i Department of Health and the Hawai‘i Public Health Institute launched a new public service announcement campaign to call attention to strategies used by tobacco companies that target children and youth.

In Hawai‘i each year, the tobacco industry spends an estimated \$24 million on marketing. These tactics are meant to lure curious keiki into experimenting with vapes to addict a new generation of Hawai‘i’s youth to nicotine.

[“Stronger Together: We See/They See”](#) reminds Hawai‘i residents of the need to protect keiki from tobacco industry tactics. The campaign is slated to run through April and includes TV, radio, digital, social media, and print advertisements.

“Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the U.S. and in Hawai‘i,” said Deputy Director of Health Resources Danette Wong Tomiyasu. “Hawai‘i has made great gains in reducing youth cigarette use, but with the introduction of vaping, we are now facing a crisis of youth addiction.”

“Hawai‘i was the first state to pass legislation raising the minimum age to buy tobacco products to 21,” said Jessica Yamauchi, Chief Executive Officer of the Hawai‘i Public Health Institute. “This was an important first step, but it’s not enough. We need to do more to inform the public about the dangers of vaping and mobilize the community to protect our keiki.”

Research shows that kids are more likely to be influenced to smoke and vape by marketing than by peer pressure. The tobacco industry’s efforts directly targeting children have been tremendously successful, leading to an alarming increase in the use of e-cigarettes by Hawai‘i’s youth. According to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, nearly one in three Hawai‘i high school students report having vaped in the last 30 days – a 20% increase in just two years.

The public is encouraged to visit the campaign website, StrongerTogether.hawaii.gov, to get more information about the dangers of vaping, share campaign images on social media, and sign-up to stay informed.

For youth already addicted to nicotine, the Hawai'i Tobacco Quitline offers My Life, My Quit, a free program with trained coaches to help youth quit smoking or vaping. Teens can sign up by texting "Start my Quit" to 36072 or calling 855-891-9989.

#